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New York

Chairman: Mr. Erdös ..... (Hungary)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda items 64 to 84 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all agenda items

The Chairman: Informal working paper No. 6 is now being distributed; it contains food for thought on our work for this afternoon.

I call now on Mr. Evgeniy Gorkovskiy, Director of the Department for Disarmament Affairs and Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

Mr. Gorkovskiy (Director of the Department for Disarmament Affairs and Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs): The physical operation of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific from Kathmandu was addressed by the representative of Nepal last week, at the 20th meeting of the First Committee. In view of that, I would like to recall the following developments in order to place the facts on record. The Regional Centre was established by the General Assembly in 1987 by its resolution 42/39 D of 30 November 1987, which stated that the Centre was established "on the basis of existing resources and of voluntary contributions that Member States and interested organizations may make to that end" (*para. 1*). While the P-5 post of Director of the Regional Centre is funded from the regular United Nations budget, the operational costs of the Centre are to be financed by the host Government. The Director of the Regional Centre has been successful over the years in securing voluntary contributions from interested Member States in support of the Centre's programme of activities. Nevertheless, it should be noted that donor countries have stipulated that their contributions are for financing certain specific activities and not for covering the operation and maintenance costs of the Centre.

Owing to the unavailability of premises to house the Centre in Kathmandu and of clear assurances on the financing of local operational costs, the Regional Centre has been operating since its inception from United Nations Headquarters in New York. On the basis of that arrangement, a host country agreement and a letter of understanding between His Majesty's Government of Nepal and the United Nations were signed in June 1988. The General Assembly, in its resolutions 54/55 C and 55/34 H, requested the Secretary-General to conduct consultations with Nepal as well as with other Member States concerned and with interested organizations to assess the possibility of enabling the Centre to operate effectively from Kathmandu.

Pursuant to those requests, protracted consultations by the Secretariat finally yielded the following positive outcomes. During his visit to Nepal in March 2001, the Secretary-General discussed with the host Government the issue of relocating the Regional Centre, and he was assured that Nepal was committed to hosting the Centre in Kathmandu as soon

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as possible. At the same time, in March this year, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, in cooperation with the host Government, identified an appropriate building in Kathmandu to house the Regional Centre. Subsequently, the Department prepared a draft host country agreement and a letter of understanding and, in March, forwarded both to the host Government for consideration.

Four months later, in August this year, the Department for Disarmament Affairs was informed over the telephone that the Permanent Representative of Nepal had been authorized to sign the letter of understanding, with minor amendments, to be exchanged between the host Government and the United Nations. The Department was also informed that the letter of understanding should refer to the 1988 host country agreement pending the conclusion of a new agreement, since it bore no substantive difference from the host country agreement presented by the Department in March 2001. That same information was later conveyed in writing on 28 August by the Permanent Mission of Nepal.

Since there has been a lapse of 13 years since the 1988 host country agreement was signed, the Department sought the advice of the Office of Legal Affairs as to whether the proposal of the host Government could be acceptable. The Office of Legal Affairs responded on 26 September that the proposal of the host Government to refer to the 1988 agreement would be acceptable pending the conclusion of a new agreement, if it were changed to reflect current practice. In the meantime, the Permanent Mission of Nepal, in a note verbale of 2 October, informed the Department that Nepal was now ready to sign the host country agreement and the accompanying letter of understanding presented to it in March 2001. On the basis of that new information, the Department forwarded the 2001 host country agreement to the Office of Legal Affairs for clearance. Subsequently, on 17 October, the Department submitted to the Permanent Mission of Nepal the 2001 host country agreement, as revised by the Office of Legal Affairs, for its consideration. The Department was notified by the Permanent Mission of Nepal on 18 October that, since approval of the revisions had to be sought from its Government, it was not in a position to sign the revised 2001 agreement in time for action on the draft resolution on the Regional Centre.

With regard to the objection of the host Government to the provision of immunities and privileges to United Nations officials, regardless of their nationality, raised by the representative of Nepal in his statement before the Committee last week, the Secretariat would like to note that that provision is contained in article V, section 18 (a), of the General Convention of the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, adopted by the General Assembly on 13 February 1946 as an annex to its resolution 22 (I), to which His Majesty's Government of Nepal is a party, and that the text has been revised to conform strictly to the Convention.

The Department for Disarmament Affairs would like to stress that the Secretary-General remains committed to relocating the Regional Centre to Kathmandu as soon as possible. The Department stands ready to dispatch the Director of the Regional Centre to Kathmandu, without delay, upon the signing of the host country agreement and the accompanying letter of understanding, which is an integral part of the agreement, covering the important issue of financial responsibility for the operation of the Centre. The Department therefore sincerely hopes that the process of finalizing the host country agreement and the letter of understanding by the host Government will be completed expeditiously so that the relocation of the Director can take place very soon thereafter.

The Chairman: I now want to inform the Committee that, at it is aware, draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.2 has been causing some problems as far our schedule is concerned. I must tell the Committee that the consultations still continue. In order to wind up everything that we have in informal working paper No. 6, including draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.2, we will have to give the delegations concerned some time for consultations. This is why I was requested — and under duress I agreed to the request — to announce a half hour intermission in our work in order to get these delegations down to the table and work out a solution to their outstanding problems.

Mr. Noboru (Japan): As I indicated earlier, we have submitted to the Secretariat the second revision of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35. The understanding of my delegation is that, although we submitted the latest revision to the Secretariat about two and a half hours ago, it will still take some time for the revision to be printed. In order to help delegations to understand the latest revision, my intention is to give the revision

orally. If the recess of half an hour might be used to consider our second revision as well, it might be useful in order to speed up the process. My suggestion is therefore that, with the permission of the Chairman, I orally present the second revision before the meeting is suspended.

The Chairman: That would certainly be helpful. We heard the representative of Japan this morning with regard to the change he was willing to consider making to draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1. Perhaps this is the time for him to read out the change, which I believe is a change to operative paragraph 9 of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1. When we come to the pertinent point in cluster 1, I will then ask representatives to consider the relevant draft resolution as A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.2, that is, as understood according to the oral amendments that are going to be presented by the representative of Japan.

I ask the representative of Japan to please read out the changes so that everyone can take them down in their own copies, and so that we may consider draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.2 in the light of the amendments that he is now going to read out.

Mr. Noboru (Japan): Thank you for your understanding, Mr. Chairman.

The revision contained in draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.2, which we have just submitted to the Secretariat, is of a technical nature. I hope that it will not present any problem to any delegation. It concerns operative paragraph 9 of the draft resolution.

After consulting with certain delegations, we have decided to revise the paragraph by adding a short phrase at the very end of the sentence. I shall therefore read the paragraph out slowly with the new addition, which is very short.

> "*Calls* upon all States to redouble their efforts to prevent and curb the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, confirming and strengthening, if necessary, their policies not to transfer equipment, materials or technology that could contribute to the proliferation of those weapons, while ensuring that such policies are consistent with States' obligations under the NPT." (*A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.2, operative para. 9*)

In this particular paragraph we have used almost the same language as that which appears in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); in article III of the NPT, concerning the peaceful uses of nuclear weapons; and, in particular, in paragraph 33 of the Final Document.

As this small revision is for the purpose of clarification, I hope it will not create any problems for anybody. We hope that this revised text, although presented orally, will be acted on by the Committee when the Chairman deems it appropriate.

The Chairman: The Secretariat has obviously been unable to prepare a clean text. But I would like to ask that when we get to the draft resolution entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons", delegations bear in mind operative paragraph 9 as orally amended by the representative of Japan a moment ago.

Having said that, I will suspend the meeting.

The meeting was suspended at 3.25 p.m. and resumed at 4.15 p.m.

The Chairman: When I was here as a member of my delegation, I always used to wonder during suspensions what was going on. Now I know — these commotions — there is always a reason for everything. A lot has been going on in the last 45 minutes, and I am optimistic about the prospects. However, without anticipating events, I give the floor to the representative of Iraq for a general statement.

Mr. Matook (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to speak on the draft resolution submitted by my delegation, contained in document A/C.1/56/L.8, on the grave harmful effects of depleted uranium on human beings and the environment. Depleted uranium is one of the products of processing chemical material within the nuclear fuel cycle.

This dangerous nuclear material is processed in a special manner in order to avoid the damaging effects of radiation on the environment and human beings. Depleted uranium is radioactive material that has harmful effects when used for military purposes, when minute radioactive particles are released into the air and enter the soil, where they will remain for millions of years.

The international community was deeply shocked by the use of depleted uranium. The effects of this use on many members of the human family have been

manifest in the prevalence of leukaemia and other dangerous diseases. The European Parliament has adopted a resolution that reads in part as follows:

(*spoke in English*)

> "whereas in several European countries there is growing concern about the consequences of exposure to radiation and inhalation of toxic dust resulting from the use of depleted uranium weapons, which may have affected a number of soldiers who took part in the military operations in the former Yugoslavia, particularly in Bosnia in 1995 and Kosovo in 1999".

(*spoke in Arabic*)

The emission of depleted uranium constitutes a kind of radiological weapon because it has toxic, radioactive effects on every living thing, animals and human beings.

The international community is trying to rid humanity of all weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons. Since the use of depleted uranium for military purposes is extremely destructive and harmful to military personnel and civilians alike, it must be banned in pursuit of international efforts to rid the world of all weapons of mass destruction.

The specialized international agencies that have dealt with the use of depleted uranium, including the International Atomic Energy Agency, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme, have not denied the radiological damage caused by the use of these weapons. However, they have sought in various ways to mitigate their extremely dangerous effects. They have conducted investigations into the small-scale use of such material in certain places. However, when such international organizations conduct genuine in-depth investigations into the large-scale use of depleted uranium, the results will be very shocking, because the accumulation of toxic radiation will prove truly immense.

We do not question the work and activities of international organizations that are specialized in this field. We would have been satisfied if they had been able to work in accordance with their scientific mandates, but we are concerned that they are subject to well-known political pressures.

Humanity must press this Committee to consider and study this very fraught and important question, which may have harmful repercussions on coming generations, including vulnerability to leukaemia and other dangerous diseases. We urge a halt to the use of these weapons against military personnel and civilians, who have already fallen victim to these dangerous radiological devices. We therefore call on this Committee to adopt the draft resolution before it in order to serve the interests of humanity and to reject well-known political views and positions of narrow self-interest.

Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.2, I wish at the outset to thank you, Sir, for kindly giving us the time to hold our final consultations.

Following the discussion we held in that allotted half-hour, I wish to make an oral revision to the text of the draft resolution. We have agreed to delete paragraph 8. As a result of this deletion, the corresponding programme budget implications, as contained in document A/C.1/56/L.59, should also disappear. Allow me also to sincerely thank all delegations for their willingness, understanding and spirit of compromise.

In conclusion, I wish to ask the Committee to adopt draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.2, as orally revised, by consensus.

The Chairman (*spoke in French*): The comments of the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will be taken into account when we take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.2, as orally revised.

(*spoke in English*)

I would like to proceed according to informal working paper No. 6. The first item under cluster 1, nuclear weapons, is draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1*, as orally revised; entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons". The asterisk indicates that the document has been reissued for technical reasons.

I call on those delegations wishing to explain their view or position before taking action on this draft resolution.

Mr. Markram (South Africa): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the partner countries of the New Agenda Initiative — Brazil, Egypt, Ireland,

Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden — with reference to the draft resolution entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons", document A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1*.

One of the most significant outcomes of the 2000 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was the unequivocal undertaking made by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, to which all parties to the NPT are committed under article VI. Unfortunately, draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1* misappropriates that outcome, in our view. By placing it in operative paragraph 3, as subparagraph (e), under the *chapeau* of "practical steps", it suggests that that undertaking has not yet been given. The placement of "an unequivocal undertaking" also creates a contextual linkage with general and complete disarmament, something we also cannot accept.

The unequivocal undertaking by nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals has been given. Let us be absolutely clear about that. It is not a step to be taken. Our foreign ministers noted this important distinction in a ministerial communiqué submitted to this Committee on 8 October. They also stressed that implementation of the other NPT steps is now the imperative. We appreciate that the sponsor of this draft resolution is well intentioned and committed to nuclear disarmament. We do not question that commitment.

We have consulted at length on A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1* to try to resolve our concerns about this draft resolution, pointing out that the New Agenda partners supported last year's resolution, as the eighth preambular paragraph correctly reflected the 2000 NPT Review Conference outcome. A return to that language would have accommodated the concerns we have on this year's draft resolution. Regrettably, this has not been reflected in A/C.1./56/L.35/Rev.1*. For this reason, the partner countries of the New Agenda will be obliged to abstain in the vote on this draft resolution.

The Chairman: As no other delegations wish to explain their position before the vote, we will proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1*, as orally revised. A recorded vote has been requested. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1*, as orally revised. The draft resolution is entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Japan at the 21st meeting, on 2 November. The following countries have become additional sponsors of the draft resolution: Australia, Fiji, Lebanon and Papua New Guinea.

The Committee will now take action on the draft resolution. I would like to indicate that operative paragraph 9 of the draft resolution was orally revised. That paragraph reads:

> "*Calls upon* all States to redouble their efforts to prevent and curb the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, confirming and strengthening, if necessary, their policies not to transfer equipment, materials or technology that could contribute to the proliferation of those weapons, while ensuring that such policies are consistent with the obligation of States under the Treaty".

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova,

Romania, Saint Lucia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

India, United States of America

Abstaining:

Belarus, Bhutan, Brazil, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Georgia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Mauritius, Mexico, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Russian Federation, San Marino, South Africa, Sweden

Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1 was adopted by 123 votes to 2, with 20 abstentions.*

The Chairman: I shall now call on those delegations wishing to explain their vote after the vote.

Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China has always supported the complete prohibition and full destruction of nuclear weapons and the international community's efforts to achieve that objective. In keeping with this basic position, China agrees with the main thrust of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1*, introduced by the delegation of Japan.

At the same time, however, we need to point out that there are some major drawbacks in the text of the resolution. First, as in previous years, this year's resolution makes no mention of some of the important principles and steps that are vital to the progress of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, such as the special responsibility for nuclear disarmament that the countries possessing the largest and most advanced nuclear arsenals bear, the rejection of the doctrine of nuclear deterrence based on first use of nuclear weapons and the discontinuation of policies and practices associated with the nuclear umbrella and nuclear-sharing.

Secondly, compared to last year's resolution, this year's text has backtracked on some important issues. For instance, the wording on the preservation and the strengthening of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty that was contained in last year's resolution has been deleted from this year's text.

Finally, the Chinese delegation cannot accept mention of the report of the Tokyo Forum in the resolution because, in our view, many of the elements in that report are neither realistic nor reasonable. For these reasons, the Chinese delegation has once again abstained in the vote on this draft resolution.

Mr. Seetharam (India): The delegation of India has requested the floor after the adoption of this resolution to state its position.

India has an unwavering commitment to nuclear disarmament and the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons globally. However, the instrument ostensibly designed to promote global nuclear disarmament and genuine non-proliferation in all its aspects, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), has sadly proved to be ineffective. It is necessary to look beyond the old framework of the NPT and move towards the goal of equal and legitimate security for all through global nuclear disarmament. Basing this draft resolution exclusively on the NPT renders it flawed and thus unacceptable. The eighth preambular paragraph of document A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1, reading "Welcoming the successful adoption of the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons", refers to a document that is not balanced. That and the call for a moratorium on the production of fissile materials, in operative paragraph 3 (b), ignore political realities. The reference to nuclear tests in the sixth preambular paragraph and the call for the universality of the NPT in operative paragraph 1 are examples of hollow rhetoric. There are also a number of recommendations in the Tokyo Forum report referred to in the seventh preambular paragraph which fall in the same category.

While we agree with the basic objective of the draft resolution, namely the global elimination of nuclear weapons, there are numerous elements in it which remain unacceptable. Therefore, my delegation has cast a negative vote on the draft resolution as a whole.

Mr. Heinsberg (Germany): Germany fully shares Japan's commitment to the cause of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and, in particular, to the full implementation by all States parties of their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation

of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The NPT remains the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for nuclear disarmament. We attach particular importance to the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Its adoption by consensus strengthened the NPT and the nuclear non-proliferation regime as a whole.

Germany voted in favour of the draft resolution. It has done so on the understanding that it only enumerates some of the practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the NPT, as agreed by the 2000 NPT Review Conference. We do not interpret it as calling into question the comprehensive commitment by the State parties to the NPT to implement the conclusions of the Final Document, including the practical steps in their entirety.

Mr. Coutts (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Chilean delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1, which was introduced by Japan, without prejudice to some changes introduced this year. We appreciate the spirit behind the draft resolution. However, we would like to state for the record that we are not fully satisfied with one of the changes, which, in our opinion, detracts from the unequivocal commitment of nuclear-weapon States to completely eliminate their nuclear arsenals. For us, this is one of the most important political outcomes of the last NPT Review Conference.

Mr. Maiolini (Italy): I have asked for the floor to explain Italy's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1. Through its vote, Italy intended to acknowledge document A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1 as an improvement on the initial version of A/C.1/56/L.35. My delegation highly appreciates the wording on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the express reference to the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) process and the language used to reaffirm the importance of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Nevertheless, we still find that the draft resolution contains a somewhat limited selection from among all the important elements contained in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Although the Document is still referred to, draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1 has at times watered down the appropriate language, as is the case with reference to the START process, to which Italy gives utmost importance.

We appreciate Ambassador Noboru's presentation of A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1, which made expressly clear that the unequivocal undertaking mentioned in operative paragraph 3 (e) must be interpreted as a step that has already been taken. This authoritative interpretation of the text that we have just approved was indeed welcome. My delegation intends to ensure that no element of this draft resolution can impair the successful outcome of the NPT process. The next Preparatory Committee should proceed from this process, given that no part of this draft resolution should ever detract from the achievement of the 2000 NPT Review Conference Final Document or weaken the obligations therein.

Mr. Durrani (Pakistan): My delegation is taking the floor to explain its vote after the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1, entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons". My delegation finds several provisions of the draft resolution unacceptable. The draft resolution places inordinate emphasis on non-proliferation rather than nuclear disarmament. We cannot endorse the premise of the eighth and ninth preambular paragraphs. Furthermore, we also entertain reservations on operative paragraph 11.

Pakistan, as a non-party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), understands that we are not under any obligation to implement operative paragraph 3, including several subparagraphs therein. Nor are we bound by any of the provisions which emanate from the NPT Review Conference or other forums in which Pakistan is not represented. This understanding enabled my delegation to abstain rather than vote against this draft resolution.

Mr. Ngoh Ngoh (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): My delegation was not present in the room when draft resolution A/C.1/L.35/Rev.1 was adopted. We apologize for that. Had we been present, we would have voted in favour of the draft resolution. I hope that the Secretariat takes due note of this.

The Chairman: We have duly noted the observation made by the representative of Cameroon.

Mr. Müller (Austria): At the outset, I would like to thank the representative of Japan for having introduced the draft resolution entitled "A path to the

total elimination of nuclear weapons". Austria voted in favour of that draft resolution, as it contains many elements to which my delegation fully subscribes.

Austria wholeheartedly shares Japan's commitment to the cause of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and, in particular, to the full implementation by all States parties of their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We attach particular importance to the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Its adoption by consensus was the result of a delicate balance having been achieved between different interests. We cannot, however, conceal our disappointment that operative paragraph 11, on the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system and the additional protocols, falls short of our expectations and is considerably weaker than the corresponding text of last year.

The heinous attacks of 11 September have, in our view, clearly demonstrated that the strengthening of the IAEA's — in particular by strengthening its safeguards system — is one of the many measures that need to be taken to adequately address this new type of threat. The conclusion of additional protocols and the swift implementation of the integrated safeguards system are key elements for enhancing nuclear non-proliferation. Unfortunately, the language chosen for operative paragraph 11 this year does not, in our view, reflect the urgency with which these issues have to be tackled.

Mr. McGinnis (United States of America): The United States was compelled to vote against draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1*, primarily because of the language it contains on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Had that language been in line with the formula used elsewhere, the United States would have been prepared to recommend a different vote.

We believe that the spirit of the draft resolution is something to which we can fully subscribe, and we did so last year. At the same time, my delegation believes that nuclear disarmament will not be achievable in the absence of stronger non-proliferation controls to preclude the transfer of weapons of mass destruction and their technologies.

The United States has made clear its commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its readiness to contribute to the implementation of the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. The United States vote on the draft resolution today should in no way be seen as a repudiation of those parts of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1* that support the same principles.

Mr. de la Fortelle (France) (*spoke in French*): The First Committee has just taken action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1*, entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons". One year after the adoption, by consensus, of the Final Document of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we believe that any draft resolution dealing with nuclear disarmament must faithfully reflect the delicate balance achieved in that text. My country believes that the draft resolution introduced to the Committee today by Japan fulfils that requirement, especially as it relates to two important issues that are inextricably linked: the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to eliminate their nuclear arsenals on the one hand, and the reference to general and complete disarmament on the other.

France, which is determined to fulfil all of the commitments it has entered into in the field of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, this year felt able to support the draft resolution.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The elimination of nuclear weapons continues to be the main disarmament priority of the international community. Cuba has always supported initiatives to attain that goal as soon as possible. Despite its title, however, the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1* deals with selective issues relating to non-proliferation instead of with nuclear disarmament itself. In contrast to the approach reflected in the draft resolution, Cuba does not believe that the path to nuclear disarmament is based on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the universalization of which is called for in operative paragraph 1. The NPT has not eliminated nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth, despite the fact that it has been in existence for more than 30 years. The unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States at the Sixth NPT Review Conference is being presented to us as something new, when in fact the commitments entered into are not new; they were part of the Treaty when it was adopted and should already have been fulfilled.

In order to eliminate nuclear weapons, we must immediately begin multilateral, non-discriminatory negotiations leading to the attainment of our goal within a clearly defined time frame. The draft resolution just adopted lacks a clear statement to that effect. Not even the recommendation in operative paragraph 3 (c), on the establishment of an appropriate subsidiary body of the Conference on Disarmament with a mandate to deal with nuclear disarmament, is very clear about the role that the Conference should play in this matter. The wording of that paragraph does not reflect the positions that the countries in the Non-Aligned Movement have traditionally supported in negotiations on nuclear disarmament within the context of the Conference on Disarmament. There is no mention by name of a special committee on nuclear disarmament or of the need for such a body to have a negotiating mandate.

For those reasons, as in earlier years, Cuba abstained on the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1*. We do not doubt that the authors of the text had the best of intentions, but we hope that they will bear in mind our comments for the future.

The Chairman: We now turn to the last item under cluster 1, nuclear weapons: draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.8, entitled "Sub-item on the effects of the use of depleted uranium in armaments".

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the beginning of the year, newspaper headlines throughout the world were filled with reports of NATO's use of depleted uranium in the Balkans and its impact on the environment and on certain individuals involved in the war in Kosovo. People became aware — perhaps for the first time at the global level — of a problem from which some people had been suffering since 1991, as a consequence of the so-called Gulf war.

The debate continued throughout the year, though, unfortunately, not with the same level of intensity or transparency it had in the beginning. However, there was a concern that this was an extremely dangerous weapon, with incalculable consequences for the lives of human beings and for the environment in which we all live. At a time when humanitarian concerns have led to a strong international movement in support of the prohibition or control of certain kinds of weapons, it would be inexplicable if we were to fail to deal properly with the questions raised by the use of depleted uranium in armaments.

Cuba deems it absolutely necessary that there be a total prohibition on the manufacture and use of weapons using depleted uranium. Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.8 has the virtue of taking up for the first time in this Committee the question of the use of depleted uranium in armaments. The draft basically confines itself to calling on States and the relevant organizations to give their views on this matter.

We believe that this initial approach is a very sensible one, as it avoids unnecessary confrontations? and will enable States to offer their views on a matter that is of concern to all of us.

For all of these reasons, the delegation of Cuba will vote in favour of the draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.8, and we hope that the majority of delegations will also support it.

Mr. Durrani (Pakistan): I am taking the floor to explain Pakistan's position on the draft resolution entitled "Sub-item on the effects of the use of depleted uranium in armaments", as contained in document A/C.1/56/L.8.

My delegation does not agree with the implications of the second and third preambular paragraphs. In our view, depleted uranium munitions are conventional weapons. While it is legitimate to examine their effects on health from a radiological point of view — a matter that is already under International Atomic Energy Agency and World Health Organization scrutiny — the suggestion that these are weapons of mass destruction is not borne out by objective evidence.

My delegation will therefore be constrained to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

Mr. Lint (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.8 on the effects of depleted uranium in armaments. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta

and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area Norway align themselves with this statement.

The European Union has decided to vote against the draft resolution on the effects of the use of depleted uranium in armaments. Two considerations have led us to take this position.

First, obviously, we cannot support the second preambular paragraph of the draft, which lists depleted uranium as a weapon of mass destruction. In addition, with respect to the fourth preambular paragraph, we would like to recall that international organizations such as the World Health Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme have carefully studied the issue of the potential pathological effects of the use of depleted uranium in armaments, and they have concluded that at this stage, it has not been demonstrated that depleted uranium used in armaments has any notable effect on health or on the environment.

The Chairman: We will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.8.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.8, under the item on general and complete disarmament, entitled "Sub-item on the effects of the use of depleted uranium in armaments".

This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Iraq at the 14th meeting of the Committee, on 24 October.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Jordan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Tunisia, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen

Against:

Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Georgia, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Tonga, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.8 was adopted by 49 votes to 45, with 39 abstentions.

The Chairman: I give the floor to those delegations wishing to make statements in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. McGinnis (United States of America): The United States voted against the draft resolution entitled "Sub-item on the effects of the use of depleted uranium in armaments" (A/C.1/56/L.8).

The agenda of the General Assembly does not need a sub-item on this subject, especially since the World Health Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme have already conducted thorough and convincing studies. Those studies in turn have concluded that the use of depleted uranium in armaments has not been shown to have a notable effect on the environment or on the health of human beings.

The second and third preambular paragraphs of the draft imply that depleted uranium could be considered a new type of weapon of mass destruction.

Although this assertion does not rise to the level of seriousness that might deserve a reply, it reinforces our conviction that voting "no" was the only appropriate alternative for the delegation of the United States.

Mr. Borrie (New Zealand): I wish to take this opportunity to explain New Zealand's position on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.8, on depleted uranium.

New Zealand voted against this draft resolution because we do not consider that depleted uranium is a weapon of mass destruction and existing scientific evidence does not allow us to support the contention that radioactive particles from depleted uranium weapons are spread over large areas, contaminating soil and animal and plant life.

We also consider that work in this area is not a good use of the resources of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, when expert technical bodies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme are best placed to carry out studies on this issue and have already done so.

However, the New Zealand Government is aware of the public concern relating to depleted uranium and continues to have an open mind about the results of any future studies and to possible effects of depleted uranium munitions. We welcome further scientific investigation of this issue.

The Chairman: We now turn to the next item on our agenda, in working paper No. 6, under cluster 4, conventional weapons.

We have before us draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.43*, entitled "Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects". I now call on those representatives who wish to explain their position or vote before action is taken. I see none.

The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.43*.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.43*, entitled "Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Sweden at the Committee's 15th meeting, on 26 October. In addition to the sponsors of the draft resolution contained in documents A/C.1/56/L.43* and A/C.1/56/INF/2, the following countries have become sponsors: Bolivia, Cambodia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Georgia, Latvia, Nicaragua and Panama.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/46/L.43* have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

It was so decided.

The Chairman: I now call on those delegations who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Maandi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): In joining the consensus, my delegation would nevertheless like to indicate that we would have been more satisfied if the draft resolution on the very important issue of conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects had taken into account the comments made on operative paragraph 5. We believe that this paragraph is selective, since it highlights and emphasizes only five of the proposals of States parties to the Convention. This fact creates the risk of conferring on these five items a higher status than was conferred on other proposals made during the preparatory session or on proposals that could have been submitted during the 2001 Review Conference.

Mr. Thamrin (Indonesia): Mr. Chairman, with your permission I would like to make a brief explanation regarding my delegation's position on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.43*.

Indonesia is not a party to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. Furthermore, we have some difficulty regarding several concepts that have been incorporated into this draft resolution.

However, we have not stood in the way of its adoption by consensus.

Mr. Roslan (Malaysia): My delegation has asked for the floor to explain its position after the adoption of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.43*. We would like to put on record the fact that Malaysia is not a State party to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects and its Protocols thereto.

However, it is not the intention of my delegation to stand in the way of a consensus text, as we highly appreciate the initiator's and sponsors' sincere attitude and firm commitment to this issue, which led to the draft text contained in document A/C.1/56/L.43*.

Mr. Atieh (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation joined the consensus on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.43*. We are convinced that international efforts should be exerted to overcome any negative effects of the use of certain conventional weapons that may be deemed to have indiscriminate effects and cause excessive harm.

Although we joined the consensus, my delegation would like to state its reservation with respect to operative paragraph 5. This paragraph is not in keeping with the other provisions of this draft resolution. Indeed, operative paragraph 5 is incomplete and selective in that it refers to just a certain number of items, thus running the risk that these items may be construed as having a higher priority than other items.

Mr. Al-Hassan (Oman): Mr. Chairman, allow me to explain my delegation's position after the vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.43* just adopted.

My Government is not a party to the Convention, although we strongly believe that it marks a step in the right direction. At the same time, we take into consideration the assurances that the sponsors of this draft resolution have given us concerning the new application on States that are not parties.

However, we would like to flag a point of concern — not a reservation at all — regarding operative paragraph 5, which actually notes a number of proposals.

We had hoped that this particular draft resolution would, as in the past, be adopted by consensus without new language being put forward.

Allow me to conclude by stating that we are firmly convinced of the noble intentions of the sponsors of this draft resolution, and we hope that in the future a further level of cooperation will be developed with regard to this particular issue.

The Chairman: Under cluster 6, "Confidence-building measures, including transparency in armaments", we turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.2, as orally revised earlier today, entitled "Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa".

I call on the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

Mr. Dhanapala (Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs): In the light of the fact that paragraph 8 of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.2 has been deleted from the text by an oral revision, the provisions of the document on programme budget implications (A/C.1/56/L.59) related to that paragraph are no longer applicable.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.2, as orally revised. The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. May I take it that the Committee adopts the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.2, as orally revised, was adopted.

The Chairman: Under cluster 9, "Related matters of disarmament and international security", we turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.49/Rev.1, entitled "Multilateral cooperation in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and global efforts against terrorism".

I shall now call on delegations wishing to explain their votes or positions before we proceed to take action on the draft resolution.

Mr. Lee (Republic of Korea): My delegation wishes to explain its position in support of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.49/Rev.1. This very timely and forward-looking draft resolution seeks to promote multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in the United States. As the recent attacks made clear, we need to re-evaluate and redefine our thinking regarding new

threats to international peace and security. There is no question but that there is a clear need to strengthen both traditional and non-traditional approaches in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Indeed, we recognize the close connection between the issues of international terrorism and of multilateral disarmament and arms control. Combating terrorism in all its forms will require a broader response from the entire international community. In particular, I wish to underscore the need to pursue not only law enforcement strategies but also multilateral arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation measures in the fight against terrorism. In that regard, draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.49/Rev.1 is an important step in the right direction, so my delegation strongly supports the Chairman's text.

Mr. Sam (Sierra Leone): My delegation respectfully requests a 24-hour deferment of action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.49/Rev.1 so that further consultations can be held among members of the African Group.

The Chairman: The intention of the Chair, as we all know, was to wind up the Committee's work in the course of today. The only outstanding issue which has not yet been tackled is this draft resolution: A/C.1/56/L.49/Rev.1. If we were to go along with the request for a deferment, we would have to meet tomorrow. I also have to say that I have been in touch with the African Group as a whole, and it provided me with very interesting and rich revisions to the text. If I may speak my mind, I am honestly somewhat surprised by the request for a 24-hour deferral of action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.49/Rev.1.

Mr. Ahipeaud Guebo (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): Although we of course align ourselves with the position of the Group of African States, my delegation would like to express the concerns it has with draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.49/Rev.1.

Our first concern is about the fourth preambular paragraph, which refers to specific General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on terrorism. We wonder why resolution 3314 (XXIX) was not mentioned, even though it was supported by the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement and is a good basis on which to begin to establish a definition of what constitutes terrorism.

Our second concern is about the fifth preambular paragraph, which establishes a close link between international terrorism, on the one hand, and illicit arms-trafficking and the illegal movement of nuclear, chemical, biological and other potentially deadly materials, on the other hand.

The international community must agree on the meaning of the concept of terrorism in order to avoid a battle over words. Terrorism cannot be defined solely as extremist acts. Terrorism is both action and thought, mens reus and corpus reus.

Although we have no intention whatever of playing the devil's advocate, a psychological analysis of extremist acts nevertheless reveals that such acts are motivated by pent-up frustrations linked to injustice, a rejection of the other, the arrogance caused by the law of the stronger, and the conviction that there are no other choices. Those are the frustrations that are closely linked to extremists acts, and not the transfer of, or trafficking in, arms. In the end, the use of arms is just the tip of the iceberg. This is our understanding of things.

In my delegation's opinion, the illicit transfer of, and trafficking in, arms is of course dangerous to human life. We nevertheless believe that this is a totally different phenomenon. The delegation of Côte d'Ivoire is not fully convinced by the current language of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.49/Rev.1. But, in response to the appeal made by the Chairman this morning, we would not object to any eventual consensus, taking into account that we need to agree on the essential points.

The Chairman: Let me respond right away to the three remarks and observations made by the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

The first remark was with regard to a reference to a General Assembly resolution. Originally, as it will be recalled, we had a different formulation in draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.49 as far as references are concerned. But, at the request of the Group of African States, I included General Assembly resolution 49/60 in the text. There were many other ideas about referring to each and every General Assembly resolution that had been adopted on terrorism. But, having consulted a number of countries and delegations, I decided that making a general reference, and then singling out those resolutions that have special relevance to what we are doing here, would be

more practical. I therefore thought it would not be wise or practical to enumerate all the General Assembly resolutions, which certainly exist, but to make instead a general reference to all General Assembly and Security Council resolutions — as is the case in this particular draft resolution, A/C.1/56/L.49/Rev.1.

The second observation made by the representative of Côte d'Ivoire regards the paragraph referring to a close connection. I must say that, as we all remember, this clearly comes from a very recent Security Council resolution that notes

> "the close connection between [inter alia] international terrorism and ... illegal arms-trafficking, and illegal movement of nuclear, chemical, biological and other potentially deadly materials". (*Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), para. 4*)

This is not a new thing. It is in the Security Council resolution; and it establishes a clear link between the fight against terrorism and the mandate of the First Committee. This is why it is singled out. It is included in the draft resolution with wording that reflects, very truthfully, Security Council resolution 1373 (2001).

On the last point made by the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, I am the last one to argue with him on the issue of injustices, frustrations and difficulties. But this draft resolution does not speak about that. We have to separate the subjects and see where the appropriate forum for discussing item "x" or item "y" is. Therefore, I trust that the appropriate forum will be discussing issues that have relevance to the problems and difficulties he alluded to. But this draft resolution, submitted in the First Committee, does not deal with injustice and frustration. Although that is definitely part of the whole picture, we have to focus on what we are called upon to do here. It is a politically symbolic gesture that we are called upon to make here, without going into the very many multifaceted issues that are related to international terrorism, about which the week-long debate in the General Assembly spoke abundantly.

Those are, I hope, very specific answers to the concerns raised by the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Zeidan (Lebanon): I would just like to state, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, that we support the position put forth by the African Group.

Mr. Ahipeaud Guebo (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): We had no intention of getting into an argument about this. We are all in agreement that there is a need to combat terrorism. I simply wanted to offer a point of view. You yourself gave me reason to do so while I listened to you, Mr. Chairman. In English, you said you were citing language from a resolution of the Security Council. You used the words "inter alia", but I must say that I do not see that phrase in the paragraph in question here. If that phrase had been included there, we would not have had this discussion. I just wanted to point that out.

The Chairman (*spoke in French*): I could respond to that point, but I do not want to get into a discussion either. If the representative of Côte d'Ivoire were to compare draft resolutions A/C.1/56/L.49 and A/C.1/56/L.49/Rev.1, he would see that there is a difference. Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.49 makes a specific reference to the Security Council. Here that is not the case. That is why the phrase "inter alia" was removed.

I have no more requests to explain position but, as I mentioned to delegations earlier — and I want to draw their attention specifically to this point — this is a text which is a common denominator. I have spoken to very many delegations. Sometimes I got contradictory amendments and ideas. I tried to identify the basic preoccupations of delegations in order to come up with a structure that is liveable — which is clearly not the ideal scenario, as I said earlier this morning. I think I have to repeat this again. This is not an easy undertaking, even if it sometimes seems that the subject lends itself to easy solutions. Therefore, the text you have before you captures, in essence, the various views and brings them into one draft resolution.

We could have a deferral of 24 hours, which would mean that we will have to meet tomorrow afternoon. But, as I said earlier, this is as far as the Chairman can go. I know what I am talking about because I have spoken to very many delegations, and I know I cannot satisfy everyone. Therefore, I am not going to change this text because if I change the text in one place, others will take exception to the text and want to change it in another place. As I said earlier — I did not think I had to repeat this but I am obliged to — if some delegations believe that this text cannot be adopted without a vote, I will solemnly withdraw it. So, we can meet tomorrow afternoon to give enough

time to the delegations requesting the deferral to meet again, but the text will remain as it stands because I know that if I make changes, it will open Pandora's box. Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.49/Rev.1 is the only feasible alternative I see which will allow everyone on board. If some delegations believe we cannot do this, then I will withdraw this draft resolution.

In the light of the wish expressed by some delegations to have a 24-hour deferral for action to be taken on A/C.1/56/L.49/Rev.1, I will have to reconvene the First Committee tomorrow in the same room at 3 p.m. to take action or not to take action on it. Any other requests or observations from the floor?

Mr. Thapa (Nepal): I am not going to talk about draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.49. I just have to say something about the physical operation of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia, in Kathmandu, about which the Director of the Department for Disarmament Affairs made a statement to the Committee a few minutes ago.

My intervention is going to be very, very short. I just want to note that when the representative of the Department for Disarmament Affairs spoke to the Committee, he unfortunately left out part of the communication that our mission sent to the Department on 18 October. Although he referred to the fact that the new revisions proposed in the host country agreement will have to be reviewed by the host country authorities, he did not refer to the alternative we suggested in that communication, to the effect that we could go along with the 19 March text right now to expedite the process of the physical operation of the centre in Kathmandu and then restart negotiations on the revisions that they have proposed so recently. My only point at this stage is that we have not yet received a response from the Department to our letter of 18 October 2001.

Mr. Ovia (Papua New Guinea): Normally, we do not take the floor on many issues on the First Committee's agenda. However, although we do not oppose the request made to the Chairman for a deferral of 24 hours, we feel that it would not be the best use of United Nations resources for the Committee to return in 24 hours to consider one draft resolution. Therefore, we would ask those delegations that have difficulty with this draft resolution to perhaps agree to defer action for half an hour or less. If they do not agree, the proposal the Chairman has made sounds like a good one to us. If there is no consensus in this room, we will defer to the Chairman's proposal.

The Chairman: If the request for a deferral is maintained, I will obviously have to reconvene the Committee, no matter how strange it might seem, for one single resolution.

Mr. Lint (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I do not know if this solution would be acceptable to a majority of those present, but perhaps a little coffee break might yield a solution.

The Chairman: Belgium's suggestion is pretty much what we heard from Papua New Guinea. I have been looking at the floor and there has been no reaction whatsoever. That proposal might provide a way out for those who feel that they have to have a second look at this, but the Chair cannot decide. It obviously depends on those delegations who requested a deferral. Again, I am scrutinizing the hall. If there is a favourable reaction to this proposal, we could take a pause and reconvene in about half an hour, and then dispense with the work in the course of today. I am now turning to those delegations who initiated the question of deferral to see if they agree with the suggestion made by two delegations.

Again — as one can see — no one is reacting to these suggestions, I have to deduce that the suggestion of having a coffee break or a suspension for half an hour does not meet the expectations of those who requested a deferral. In the light of this, with some sadness, I have to say that we are not able to wind up the Committee's work today. We will have to reconvene tomorrow in this conference room at 3 p.m.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.